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ABSTRACT

In the earliest studies of child language, attention was given to language production as utterances of sound. Association of language with meaning followed as language development and the relationship between language and thought gained serious recognition in the study of child development. The traditional societal view of "a child should be seen and not heard" is singular in loss of historical luster as a pervading truth or value. The pace of study of child language, limited by design and control, gained rapidly in sphere of inquiry as process and product of language development challenged researchers to innovative implementation. Investigators, dates, and nature of inquiry and finding, present an overview of the historical emergence of language development as a major factor in behavior, communication, thought, and learning. This historical review of the literature on the relationship between environment and language development is intended to identify expanding inquiry from points of inception, as concomitant to dramatic political and societal change. The review cites trends and impacting events which shape the emergence of continuing inquiry. (Contains a 105-item bibliography of research published between 1932 and 1969.) (NKA)

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SUMMARY #6: REVIEW OF HISTORICAL RESEARCH

The Relationship Between Environment and Language Development: A Review of Research and Reading

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The Relationship Between Environment and Language Development:

A Review of Research

In the earliest studies of child language, attention was given to language production as utterances of sound. Association of language with meaning followed as language development and the relationship between language and thought gained serious recognition in the study of child development.

The traditional societal view of *"a child should be seen and not heard"* is singular in loss of historical luster as a pervading truth or value.

The pace of study of child language, limited by design and control, gained rapidly in sphere of inquiry as process and product of language development challenged researchers to innovative implementation.

Investigators, dates, and nature of inquiry and finding, present an overview of the historical emergence of language development as a major factor in behavior, communication, thought, and learning.

Language as communication, ranging from person-to-person contact to the myriad technological forms is in conceptual paradigm, *"literacy"* of assigned time and place.

The historical review of the literature is intended to identify expanding inquiry from points of inception, as concomitant to dramatic political and societal change.

Not only is a child seen and heard, but a child is encouraged and urged to speak and respected with support in the projected role of societal change.

The historical review cites trends and impacting events which shape the emergence of continuing inquiry.

Home and Family Environment

Sibling Relationships. **Davis** (1937), in a study of children from five to ten years of age reported the linguistic superiority of only children as well as the superiority of

children with siblings over twins. **Day** (1932), in a study of the language development of twins, reported a relative inferiority of twins as compared with single children. **Howard** (1946), found the language development of triplets even more retarded than twins. It is suggested that twins and triplets meet each other's need for intercommunication so readily, the need for oral communication with adults is diminished.

In a study of kindergarten, first- and second-grade children, **Higgenbotham** (1961), found that children without siblings gave longer talks, used longer sentences, spoke more slowly, were more easily heard, and had more correct articulation than children with siblings. Recordings of *"share and tell"* episodes of 108 private-school children with intelligence and socioeconomic ratings above average were studied. It was also found that there exists an inverse relationship between the number of siblings and the quality of oral language.

Aserlind (1963), examined the verbal skills of children in families of low socioeconomic status and found that differentiation could be made among children on the basis of language development with those whose language skills were relatively mature tending to have fewer siblings.

Language Deprivation. **Mason** (1942), in a now classic study, described the effect of complete oral language deprivation of a 6 1/2 year old youngster who was taught to speak and brought up to normal intelligence in less than two years, with sensory experiences, instruction, and physical care.

Skeels (1938) and **Dawe** (1942), studied children living in orphanages from the view of cultural deprivation. Both **Skeels**, who provided nursery school experience, and **Dawe**, who provided specific language training, reported gains in language ability.

Moore (1947) found that oral language development was slower for orphanage children than for non-orphans, and that vocabulary size, as well as the number and variety of subjects spontaneously discussed were all smaller for the institutionalized children.

Goldfarb, in a series of studies (1943, 1945, 1946) evaluated the language of children who spent their first three years in an institution. He compared them with foster children who lived in foster homes from early infancy. The children reared in an institutional environment showed marked language deficiencies in all areas measured, and their behavior was characterized as passive. The investigator concluded that institutional deprivation in the first three years could produce permanent harm to the intellectual, linguistic, and personal social development of these children.

In a study of infants, **Brodbeck** and **Irwin** (1946) compared the frequency and variety of phonemes uttered by a group of orphanage children with those heard among a group living with their own families. The differences indicating the handicap of the orphanage group were evident as early as the first two months and the discrepancies between the two groups became more marked by the fourth and sixth months of life.

McCarthy (1954) summarized other studies which show that deficiencies in vocabulary, articulation, and fluency result from limitations both in quantity and in quality of adult contact provided for children in many orphanages.

Parental Practices and Relationships. **Moncur** (1951) in a study of stutterers and non-stutterers between five and eight years of age, suggested that the parents attitude and behavior contributed to the onset of stuttering since the stuttering commenced after the parents had had ample time to establish discipline patterns.

Other studies by **Kinstler** (1961), **Moll** and **Darley** (1960), **Johnson** (1942), **Fitzsimons** (1958), **Duncan** (1949), **Becky** (1942), and **Wood** (1946), dealing with stuttering, retardation, and articulatory defects, not physiologically caused, indicate that the defects are related to a mentally healthy home environment. It has also been reported that children free of such speech defects tend to come from homes in which the environment includes the affection, consistent but mild discipline, reasonable standards, opportunities for unpressured speaking, provided by parents who have positive feelings toward themselves.

Weiner (1969) investigated mothers' reactions to delayed language development in their children. The data obtained suggests that the effects on the children of their mothers' reactions is a vital area of investigation. The net effect may be an inhibition of the child's language development beyond that attributable to the basic etiology of the problem. The semistructured interview was used to explore the areas of the development of the child, the mother's specific experiences with her child's problem, her reactions to the problem, the reactions of the other family members, the effects of the problem on the family, and its effects upon the child.

Hess and **Shipman** (1965) studied the effect of mother-child interactions as clues to children's learning. The investigators assumed that the structure of the social systems and the structure of the family shape communications and that language shapes cognitive styles of problem solving. Two family types following **Bernstein's** (1964) description were chosen for study: those oriented toward control by status appeal and those oriented toward persons. In status-oriented families behavior tends to be regulated in terms of role expectation. In the person-oriented family the unique characteristics of the child modify status demands and are taken into account in

interaction. In this study the mothers from four different socioeconomic levels were taught three simple tasks which they were asked to teach to their four-year old children. The objective of the project was to relate the behavior and performance of individual mothers to the cognitive and scholastic behavior of their own children ... Marked social class differences in the ability of the children to learn from their mothers in the teaching sessions were found. One of the features of the behavior of mothers and children of lower socioeconomic class was a tendency to act without taking sufficient time for reflection and planning. This impulsive behavior the investigators conclude, lacks meaning because it is not sufficiently related to the context in which it occurs. **Hess** and **Shipman** further conclude that deprivation of meaning in an environment, produces a child to relate to authority rather than to rationale; who, although often compliant, is not reflective in his behavior; and for whom the consequences of an act are largely considered in terms of immediate punishment or reward rather than future effects and long-range goals. The implications for preschool programs which these findings suggest include providing experiences which give stimuli a pattern of sequential meaning; programs which show the child how ideas and events are related to one another.

Brown (1968) has analyzed the speech of preschool children for evidence of the development of *"wh"* questions in child's speech. *"Wh"* questions are those using an interrogative word from the set who, whom, what, where, when, why, and how. The findings indicated that children in the preschool years do develop the grammatical structure underlying *"wh"* questions that is much like the structure described in current transformational grammars. **Brown** contends that since the linguistic environment may affect the quality and rapidity of the child's development, it is important for parents to use *"probes"* and *"prompts."* **Brown** links this variation in linguistic development to

the process called *"expansion"* in which a parent expands the child's *"telegraphic"* speech. Since it had been reported (Cazden 1965) that more rapidly developing children had mothers with higher expansion rates, **Brown** suggests that attention to the *"wh"* questions, in the preschool years particularly, may have relevant implications with respect to the total linguistic environment.

Noel (1953) studied the relationship between the child's language usage and the usage which he heard in his environment. The sample consisted of 177 children from 155 homes in grades four to six. The results indicated a definite relationship between the quality of language usage spoken by the parents and the quality of the language usage by the child. In general, the occupation of the father did not affect the quality of the language usage of the child. It was also concluded that the more frequently the parents participate in situations requiring the use of oral expression, the better will be the quality of the child's language usage.

John (1964) examined the social context of language acquisition and observed that the rate and breadth of this acquisition is influenced by the nature of the child's verbal interactions with those charged with his care. She suggests that one of the most crucial features in the acquisition of language is the process of internalization and as this process enfolds certain preverbal experiences are transformed by labeling and categorizing. **John** defines language as *"a socially-conditioned relationship between the child's internal and external worlds, and once words have become mediators, the child can effectively change his own social and material reality."* **John** concludes that enrichment programs must include communicative and cognitive aspects of language interrelatedly in activities.

The effect of parental attitudes towards children and habits of family life have been determined as significant factors for language development. A study by **Milner** (1951) of contrasting groups of first-grade Negro children, selected on the basis of *"language IQ"* patterns of parent-child interaction, were studied for the children who were high and low scorers on the language criterion. The children were drawn from widely divergent socioeconomic levels. Children scoring high on the language test were the recipients of more overt expressions of affection, engaged in general two-way conversation, particularly at mealtime or before school.

Two studies, almost twenty years apart, conducted by **Wood** (1946) and **Sommers** (1962), revealed that combination mother-child treatment was more effective than the treatment of the child alone in speech therapy programs.

Thomas (1961) studied individuality in responses of children to similar environmental situations. It was reported that the character of a response of a young child to specific situations or to the overall attitude of the parent is the result of the interplay between environmental factors and the primary reaction pattern. **Thomas** notes that every experience is an individualized one for each child and a psychological influence can be understood only in terms of the environmental context in which it occurs and of the primary characteristics of reactivity of the child.

Entwisle (1966), in an extensive study of word associations of young children, compared the results of Amish respondents with those of rural Maryland respondents. She found that the Amish children are apparently retarded in linguistic development because they live under conditions more like those of fifty years ago than those of today. They serve, therefore, as a counterpart for the data collected by **Woodrow** and **Lowell** from Minnesota school children half a century ago. The acceleration of four or

five years of modern children as compared to children of fifty years ago in the **Woodrow** and **Lowell** study (1916) is further documented by **Templin** (1957). **Entwisle** cites cultural as well as educational factors which contribute to the increased pace of language development in modern children: elementary school curricula geared to early reading instruction; exercises designed to aid setting up grapheme-phoneme correspondences; audio-visual aids funnelling information into several sensory channels and linking them in new ways; television which provides exposure to spoken discourse mainly emanating from adult speakers; and a socially-determined learning condition of adult-child interaction.

Socioeconomic Status. Research has supported the expectation that while cultural deprivation is more likely to occur among families of low socioeconomic status, cultural deprivation results in a lower level of cognitive ability and language proficiency for children from low status families (May 1966).

In a study of the intellectual development of slum children, **John** (1963) examined two aspects of the intellectual development of Negro children of various social classes: the use of descriptive and integrative language and the use of language as a conceptual tool. The three major levels of language behavior, (labeling, relating, categorizing) were analyzed. Consistent class differences in language skills emerged between the groups. **John** points out that the middle class child has an advantage over the lower class child in tasks requiring precise and abstract language. Opportunities for learning to categorize and integrate are rare in the lives of all children since this type of learning requires specific feedback or careful tutoring.

Johnson (1967) administered the draw-a-man test and the Raven Progressive Matrices test to Guatemalan public school children. Both yielded low intelligence

scores. The significant finding is that in spite of the nonverbal nature of the test problem it seemed likely that formal and informal cultural differences in educational goals function to depress the test scores. Although this study suggested programs of social improvement for the subjects, the implications are clear that even in a nonverbal test, cultural factors may affect the performance.

Brown (1964) investigated the relationship of language development to social class and intelligence. Three aspects of verbal ability were theoretically formulated and experimentally tested with children from first and fifth grade classes of lower and middle class families. Labeling, relating, and classifying abilities were examined. Lower class children had less well-developed labeling ability and this was more pronounced among the older children. It was found that the relating dimension of verbal ability tends to increase more sharply with age than with social class. Classifying ability was significantly lower among the lower class children at all age levels. When IQ was held constant for these subjects differences associated with social class disappeared. This finding suggests that linguistic differences associated with social class may not be as great as thought associated with intelligence test performance. **Brown** suggests that the broad range of performance on standard intelligence tests of lower class children is often obscured in the emphasis upon average differences between lower and middle class groups rather than stressing the degree of overlap in performance which can usually be found. **Brown**, et al. (1966) investigated language use as affecting school performance. The researchers describe analytic style as having a high score of fluency (number of images per picture), part descriptions (describing some part of a picture in terms of physical description), and descriptive language (describing by imprint). Most scores on these three variables describe the wholistic style. With respect to the option time, it was

suggested that middle and lower class children have different strategies for processing decoding and different criteria for *"knowing the answer"* and with such differences account for the reaction time data, not reaction time which explains style and accuracy. It was reported that virtually the same information from the two social class groups was received when the amount of coding and feedback was deliberately decontrolled. The authors raised questions about social class differences which arise and experimental situations or classrooms where such controls usually exists.

Bernstein (1960) observed that linguistic differences other than dialect occur in the normal social environment and status groups may be distinguished by their forms of speech, and that the measurable inter-status differences in language facility result from entirely different modes of speech found within the middle class and the lower working class. He hypothesized that the use of the two linguistic structures is independent of nonverbal intelligence test scores, and predicted that the language scores for the working class group would be lower in relation to the scores in the higher ranges of a nonverbal measure of intelligence. **Bernstein** found that *"the high score on the nonverbal measure of intelligence is not necessarily because the test in nonverbal, for subvocal activity may accompany the process of reaching a solution, but because the relational operations required are available to members of the working class, whereas the concepts and principles required for the upper ranges of verbal tests are not."* Following a study in which two general type of linguistic codes were described, the elaborated and descriptive, **Bernstein** (1960) proceeded to investigate the qualitative difference in verbal planning which may affect levels of cognitive behavior. It was found that the middle class groups used a shorter phrase length and a longer pause interval than the working class group. These differences in the hesitation

phenomena were sharper when working class and middle class groups matched for intelligence on a group nonverbal test were compared. It was concluded that speech orientation to the restricted and elaborated code and verbal planning processes which they entail are independent of measured intelligence indicated by the tests used. The results of the analysis are supportive evidence for the two codes and their social class relationship (Bernstein 1962).

Shriner and **Miner** (1968) examined the ability of two groups of culturally disadvantaged preschool children in applying morphological rules to unfamiliar situations. From the lack of significance in the findings they concluded that the label *"culturally disadvantaged"* may be a misnomer when relevant variables are controlled.

Anastasi and **DeJesus** (1953) studied the relationship between language development and nonverbal IQ of Puerto Rican preschool children in New York City. They hypothesized that the Puerto Rican migrant retained Spanish as his principal language for group identification as well as higher social status than is accorded to the English-speaking American Negro. Since school instruction is conducted entirely in English, these children tend to learn one language in one set of situations represented by the school and another language represented by the home and community, resulting in an inadequate mastery of either language. This may account for the inferior language test performance of Puerto Rican children in both English and Spanish. It was found that the Puerto Rican children did not differ significantly from the White or Negro group in the Goodenough Draw-a-Man IQ and they excelled both White and Negro groups in mean sentence length and in maturity of sentence structure. The investigators attribute this superiority in early linguistic development to the greater extent of adult contact in the home environment of the Puerto Rican children.

In summary, environmental factors in the home environment which appear to influence a child's level of oral language maturity include: the quality and quantity of adult contacts, the degree of types of parental pressures, and the cultural mores related to socioeconomic status.

School Environment

Research relating to the effects of school environment on oral language development has been concerned with four areas: (1) the influence of the teachers' speaking habits; (2) the effect of school peers; (3) the effect of administrative organization; and (4) the effect of curricula and instructional practices.

With respect to teacher behavior, **Gesell** (1946) observed that young children imitated a teacher's speech mannerisms but did not examine similarities in oral language patterns. **Christensen** (1960), in examining teacher leadership patterns, discovered that vocabulary growth was significantly greater under teachers whose pupils rated them high on a *"warmth"* scale. **Lippitt** and **White** (1958) examined the effect of democratic and authoritarian patterns of teacher leadership. They found the democratic leadership encouraged friendly discussions, while authoritarian leadership led to either apathy or aggressiveness.

The positive effect of supportive teachers on encouraging oral communication has been demonstrated by **Andersen** and **Brewer** (1946).

Research has shown that the influence of peers on oral language development increases with the age of the child, **McCarthy** (1954), **Goldberg** (1963). **Wilson** (1963) found the influence of the peer group to be greater than socioeconomic status.

Studies of organizational practices such as ability grouping multiage grouping, nongrading, and team teaching are inconclusive with respect to oral language

development since many nonorganizational factors are frequently not controlled. A few of the more relevant are selected for review. **Mayans** (1953) grouped migrant children with regular pupils and found that they learned more English than those who were segregated for special instruction. **Torrance** (1962) found that *"high creatives"* who were grouped together for problem solving produced more ideas than those who were grouped with less creative children. In a study by **Carbone** (1961) in which he compared intermediate grade pupils who had attended nongraded and graded primaries it has been reported that the graded pupils scored significantly higher on language tests and all other tests. An examination of the nongraded procedures indicated less effective instructional practices than the traditional methods. Studies of class size have been notably lacking in controls of the type and quality of teaching under different circumstances, resulting in contrary views of the effects. Improvement of oral language skills in small groups was reported by **Schellenberg** (1959). Smaller class size, *"rooms of 20"* for disadvantaged children were studied by **Ware** (1963) who reported consistent gains in language abilities.

Research has indicated that curricula and instructional practices bear more influence on oral language development than types of organization (May, 1966). In the school environment the nature, content, and structure of the instructional program appear to determine a child's language proficiency. Emphasis has been placed on programs for the disadvantaged child with research and evaluation most extensive during recent years.

The conclusions and implications of the **Deutsch** (1964) and **Bloom** (1964) studies have challenged investigators. **Deutsch** (1964) described the *"verbal survey,"* the four-year study of 2,500 children of various racial and social class grouping in which over

100 identifiable variables concerned with language were assessed. **Deutsch** suggests that the most effective remedial enrichment programming would have to follow developmental stages, and the cumulative deficit of disadvantaged children should be met with curriculum change at the earliest possible time in the school experience. **Deutsch** concludes that *"it would appear that when one adds four years of a school experience to a poor environment, plus minority group status, what emerged are children who are apparently less capable of handling standard intellectual and linguistic tasks."* **Deutsch** cites the fact that the *"cumulative deficit phenomenon"* takes place between the first and the fifth grade years. In acknowledging the inadequate early preparation due to environmental deficiencies, **Deutsch** also questions the adequacy of the school environment.

Bloom's (1964) report that half of all growth in human intelligence takes place between birth and age four, and another 30 percent occurs between the ages of four and eight, with the remaining 20 percent taking place between eight and seventeen, was related to the kinds of environment that stimulate or retard development. It is suggested that if the intelligence of children is to be raised by the possible maximum, their environment must be changed long before they enter school. It appears to be no mere coincidence that **Bloom's** findings were published one year prior to the beginnings of the Head Start program.

Instructional Programs. In a demonstration Head Start Program (Haring, et al., 1969), a directed teaching rather than a play therapy-approach was used. In a program attempting to accelerate appropriate behaviors of disadvantaged children, it was observed that there was a direct relationship between social approval and the child's performance. The Head Start teacher increased her schedule of approval following the

child's speech responses to a ratio of one-to-one, prior to a gradual decrease in the ratio. The techniques in the demonstration program were used in modifying the Head Start program from one of incidental learning experiences to one of directed learning experiences. It was reported that the staff reached a greater understanding and skill in working with the problems of children from whom society had set limitations.

The intelligence of preschool children in a Head Start Program was related to ethnic and demographic variables (Reber and Womack 1968). The children came from Negro, Latin American, and Anglo low income homes. The children who were retested after a five-week experience in the Head Start Program showed remarkable increases in raw score, IQ, and MA using the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test. The large differences in average IQs of the three groups were difficult to explain and although such evidence is frequently interpreted as supportive of the notion of inherent racial differences in intellectual ability, the investigators note that comparisons across racial groups involve differences in caste as well as social class. It is suggested that culturally-determined caste differences probably have an important bearing on the concern parents have for the intellectual achievement of their children, as well as such other variables as the child's self image, the use of language in communication, and the degree of stimulation present in the home environment.

An early childhood education program entitled Systematic Approach to Language listed among the objectives the formation of language concepts, the learning of relationships between words and sentences, the development of awareness of self, and the development of familiarity with environment. The proposed activities included daily conversation periods and various kinds of games to develop attention, memory, listening, and perception skills (Mobilization for Youth, N.Y. 1965).

In various preschool projects for disadvantaged children, emphasis has been on language enrichment and development. Characteristics of the program are worthy of mention: (1) in Ypsilanti, Michigan, a two-year program consisted of a daily three-hour cognitively oriented nursery, a weekly 90 minute home visit, and less frequent group meetings of the pupils' parents. Verbal activities were encouraged with motor activity. The experimental groups showed significant gains; (2) in Champaign, Illinois, direct instruction similar to that used in regular school was employed as an alternative to the informal style of the traditional nursery. Over a two-year period of instruction significant gains in IQ, language, and mathematics were reported for the experimental groups. The **Bereiter-Engelmann** approach was employed; (3) in New York City, a program from pre-kindergarten through third grade concentrated on basic skills related to language development and concept formation. Gains in IQ were reported by **Deutsch** and **Goldstein** (1967) for the experimental group at the end of the pre-kindergarten period which were maintained through the end of kindergarten; (4) in Washington, D.C., tutors provided intellectual and verbal stimulation to children from the time the children were age 15 months until they were age 36 months. Instruction was on a one-tutor one-child basis, one hour per day, five days per week, in the child's home. As instruction proceeded, the children in the experimental group grew increasingly superior to the children in the control group when tested for IQ, vocabulary, and perceptual development; (5) in Fresno, California, the program emphasized language development through the use of small discussion and activity groups including not more than five children to one adult. The children were three to five years of age. The emphasis of the program was upon verbal communication and vocabulary development with each child spending most of his class time in a small discussion and activity group in which he

could verbalize naturally and frequently in a conversation rather than having to raise his hand and await his infrequent opportunity to respond to the questions of the teacher. The success of the program in increasing the intelligence of preschool children has been reported. The longitudinal benefits of the program are being explored; (6) in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, children in first and second grade who exhibited a lack of oral language ability received intensive assistance from trained speech therapists up to three hours a week. The nine language abilities isolated and evaluated by the Illinois Test of Psycholinguistic Abilities were reduced for project purposes into the following four categories: decoding, memory, association, encoding. Activities related to these areas were provided. Significant improvement was reported by the teachers and the therapist with the observation that teachers became more sensitive in observing changes as the program advanced; (7) in Bloomington, Indiana, a diagnostically based curriculum was developed. The diagnosis attempted to identify the child's learning deficits in language, concept, and fine motor development so that specific remediation procedures could be applied individually. The structured experimental curriculum was based on the assumption that intelligence can be modified by experience. Gains were reported for both level of intelligence and language facilities.

Day (1968) examined the similarities and differences of categorization style resulting from two different methods of instructing prekindergarten disadvantaged children in the use of language as an intellectual tool. Group A was organized for instruction in groups of seven following the style of **Bereiter**. Group B was organized on the basis of a developmental unit of work approach. At the end of ten months' instruction, all subjects were individually asked to tell all they could about a toy turtle, a cup, and two toy cars. An analysis of the recorded responses revealed that Group A was

able to use language in a clearer and more economical way, without describing objects more by their function. It was concluded that for these disadvantaged children with severe language deficits, a highly structured, semi-conditioning based approach to instruction was more effective.

In a three-year study (McConnell et al. 1969) a daily program of language and sensory-perceptual instruction was provided to children enrolled in two community day care centers. The program was designed to counteract the inhibiting effects of cultural deprivation on language and perceptual learning during the important formative preschool years. It placed emphasis on beginning education with the nursery-age child. During the first year of the program emphasis was placed on the receptive aspects of language and on increasing listening skills and attention span. During the second year, aspects of expressive language were given increased emphasis. Preliminary results from the first two years demonstrated significant gains in intellectual, linguistic, and perceptual functioning in comparison to control groups which were receiving many elements of the traditional kindergarten-type program. The authors contend that it is the language deficit which *"constitutes the greatest hazard to later school learning and subsequent life achievements."* They emphasize the need for the small group interaction in which exchange of conversation and individual attention to language structure are stressed by direct teaching methods.

Gratch (1969) compared five- and six-year old children in a Head Start program in terms of their tendency to use naming in a nonverbal memory task. It was expected that there would be an interaction between social class and instructional conditions with regard to recall. The most striking finding was the interaction between age and social class with respect to verbal rehearsal. Since the Head Start children's failure to produce

words occurred in a context of familiar objects for which they had ready names. **Gratch** suggests therefore, that the results of this study support **Bernstein's** (1961) argument that lower-class children's intellectual difficulties are due in large part to their failure to rely on words. In this study the task consisted of remembering the serial order of pictures of common objects. The older, middle-class children spontaneously introduced the names of these objects to help them to remember them. This study supports **Vygotsky's** (1962) findings that children of about age five years who had the requisite language skills did not tend to employ their language skills in guiding their problem solving. However, seven-year-old children did use language to guide their problem solving.

Cazden (1965) reported some implications of research on language development for preschool education. It was suggested that the preschool child, especially the disadvantaged child, may be helped best in language development by enlarging his linguistic repertoire rather than by using his nonstandard form. The need for elementary programs to provide reinforcement for the innovations of preschool programs was emphasized.

As children from project Head Start entered regular school classes (Butler 1965) the schools attempted to avoid a possible *"false start"* by giving particular attention to a continuing language development program.

Gladney and **Leviton** (1968) developed a model for teaching standard English to nonstandard English-speaking children in kindergarten to third grade, with incidental instruction in *"school talk"* and *"every day talk"* with emphasis on verb usage. Significant differences were found in the experimental group. The model for instruction

encourages the teacher to respect and accept the children's dialect while aiding the children in recognizing and learning to use standard English.

In a study of the cumulative language deficit among Indian children (Mickelson and Galloway 1969) living on four reserves in the southern region of Vancouver Island, the children were grouped in three classes: three to four years, five to six years, and seven to thirteen years, respectively, during a four-week summer program in 1968. The structured program was based on Ellis' (1967) model of preschool education and included modifications of the **Bereiter** and **Engelmann** (1966) program. Teachers and aides encouraged the children to verbalize at every opportunity and enthusiastically reinforced them socially for their efforts. Instructional materials were used to facilitate specific verbal pattern. Sorting, classifying, describing and explaining activities were based on concrete materials and verbal requests; specific verbal directions were used and visual discrimination tasks were utilized. The data support **Deutsch's** hypothesis that language deficiencies tend to remain in the verbal repertoire of the child but that this phenomenon can be corrected. It was found that a dramatic improvement in the verbal pattern of disadvantaged children can be realized by actively involving the children in specific and well-planned language experiences.

In an experimental program with linguistically deficient, as well as visually handicapped children, puppetry was introduced to focus on the listening and speaking phases of language development. The most notable result was the improvement in oral language. It is suggested that puppetry may be a language tool with potentially high value for disadvantaged children with linguistic handicaps (Reich 1968).

Loban (1966) identified the most crucial and frequent oral language difficulties as a guide for instructional emphasis. He reported that for those Negro pupils who speak a

social-class dialect the overwhelming problem is standard use of the verb, *"to be."* Case of pronouns and the double negative also present problems of usage. **Loban** found that the pupils whose parents speak informal standard English need help on coherence. Dialect speakers need help with coherence in addition to their need for changing non-standard usage. **Loban** supports the findings of research which indicate that oral drill is more effective than workbook drills for dialect speakers or for the non-typical standard speaker. **Loban** concludes that *"to improve language ability a pupil must apply whatever is studied to situations in which he has something to say, a deep desire to say it, and someone to whom he genuinely wants to say it."*

Finn (1969) attempted to determine the extent to which it is possible to understand young children's perceptions of their environment through study of their overt language behavior. Using five time points from kindergarten through fourth grade, from a subset of **Loban's** subjects, samples were taken from the set of speech interviews for each subject. The *"category variables"* which were hypothesized to reflect the children's perceptions of their environment included the areas of time, people, social activities, and attitudes. The social class differences observed in the data are provocative: the lower class children indicate through their speech far less concern with many of the factors which typify the materialistic achievement-motivated culture; there are fewer references to imaginary or fantasized objects, persons or actions; they referred less to themselves and more to other persons than did the other children; there is less preoccupation with expressions of emotion and of concern with national, religious, and other ethnic affiliations. **Finn** concludes that these findings are consistent with **Bernstein's** (1962) suggestion of the impersonality of the public mode of verbal expression.

Kaplan (1963) found that through improving the self-image of a culturally deprived child he gained motivation in developing language skills as observed through the growth in speech.

Ruddell and **Graves** (1968) investigated the relationship between the degree of syntactical language development and socioethnic status of beginning first-grade children. An analysis of error rate on test items of syntax for the high-socioeconomic caucasian and low-socioeconomic Negro groups showed a significant, positive correlation between error rate and socioethnic status. The most striking difference in error rate was on items involving the third person singular form of the verb. Since the experimental and control groups moved much closer together in performance on items that were unfamiliar to all subjects, it is suggested that practice in developing control over grammatical contrast in standard English be reemphasized. The investigators conclude that the high-socioeconomic caucasian group's exposure to standard English used by adult language models during the preschool years caused the difference in error rate on familiar items. The role of the teacher as a language model can therefore, be a crucial one. They also suggest that *"consideration be given to the teaching of standard English as a second dialect."* In this way the students can preserve their *"home"* or first dialect, and use it in situations for which it is more appropriate while they learn to use standard English to achieve increased success in school.

Heider, Cazden, and **Blan** (1968) investigated social class differences in the effectiveness and style of children's coding ability. The definition of coding ability was given as *"comparative personal skill of encoding and decoding. A coding ability score belongs to a person vis-a-vis a community and with reference to some domain."*

Sociolinguistic Factors

Ervin-Tripp (1964) reports the contribution of sociolinguistics to an understanding of language use in society and notes its relationship to societal functioning through investigating the effects on language of environmental factors of setting, participants, activities, and surroundings.

Bright (1967) stresses the need for a *"social dialectology"* which would apply a structural approach, not only to linguistic form but also to meaning, giving greater attention to semantics. Observations of semantic diversity illustrated through a description of caste function in India suggests to **Bright** that further research may determine how social stratification functions within and between groups. The semantic differences between caste dialects suggesting differences in cognitive orientation bears implication for semantic consideration in examining the language of our subcultures.

The Relationship Between Environment and Language Development:

A Review of Reading

Language and Reality

Church (1961) emphasizes that it is through language that we acquire a considerable part of our knowledge about reality. In other words, knowledge of reality is culturally defined. **Church's** reference to *"a culturally defined reality"* appears to be not only applicable but fundamental to understanding, through observation, children's response and reactions to situations. *"All human beings live in and respond to the same concrete reality. They differ, however, according to cultural and individual backgrounds, in the perspective they have on reality, in the values they find in various features of reality, in the features of reality which to them are prominent or obscure, in their sensitivity to the multitudinous possible attributes of reality, and in the connections which they establish between objects, particularly the degree to which explicit, causal chains supplant implicit, dynamic connections. They differ, too, in the feeling tones with which they endow reality."*

Hall (1959) classifies the ways in which the individual acquires his cultural heritage, recognizing three kinds of learning; informal, formal, and technical. To **Hall**, informal learning is acquired through imitation, formal learning is acquired through precepts, and technical is acquired through intellectual context.

The aspect of linguistic continuity in the acquisition of cultural heritage has been investigated by **Hockett** (1950) in a study of the relation between the mechanisms of continuity and the regularity of phonetic change. He cites the persistence of dialect, the effect of the speech of other children on a child and the continuity of linguistic tradition through successive generations of children in a community. Hockett acknowledges that

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there is no explanation at this time for the kind of linguistic change characterizable as *"regular."* From these points of view it can be assumed that the language which is acquired by a child is likely to have characteristic continuity.

A theory related to the development of new languages was advanced as early as 1886 by **Hale** who observed five instances of twins in which *"sufficient"* languages were framed by young children. *"It becomes evident that to ensure the creation of a speech which shall be a parent of a new language stock all that is needed is that two or more young children should be placed by themselves in a condition where they will be entirely or in a large degree free from the presence and influence of their elders. They must, of course, continue in this condition long enough to grow up to form a household and to have dependents to whom they can communicate their new speech."*

The aspect of language change has been explored by **Jesperson** (1921) who offers two points of view: *"Some hold that the child acquires its language with such perfection that it cannot be held responsible for the changes recorded in the history of languages, or others, on the contrary, hold that the most important source of these changes is to be found in the transmission of the language to the new generation."*

These theories of linguistic continuity, change and innovation appear significant in the light of any consideration of *"reality"* from the point of view of a child, particularly the culturally different child.

The Language Environment

Frost (1969) states succinctly *"the growing child makes the language of his family and neighborhood his language."* **Strickland** (1967) agrees: *"the child learns his language from the people closest to him and in settings of informal intimacy."*

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Durkin (1962) acknowledges that young children are interested in the language which surrounds them and therefore, proposes that in the kindergarten there should be a systematic effort *"to make the most of materials and experiences that are already a part of them."* She observes that many of the manuals which accompany the reading readiness books suggest that attention be placed on developing the child's language background pertinent to the subject in the basal reading materials. The relationship between oral language and reading is identified first through the research in reading readiness (Gunderson 1964). It is recommended that favorable attitudes toward reading, developing the child's speaking vocabulary, encouraging his speaking in sentences, answering his questions, and promoting his growth in visual and auditory discrimination are tasks which parents can perform during the preschool years. **Strang** (1961) points to evidence which indicates that success or failure in reading has its roots in the preschool years.

Watts (1944) has stated, *"There can be no language of any great value in the absence of something worth expressing."* He cites the essentials to the linguistic education of children as encouraging intelligent activity and the experimental spirit, habituating them to the idea of asking questions about things that puzzle them and of discussing the significance of what is more open to observation. **Wolman** (1962) urges that educational programs be developed to aid the socially different to *"achieve security within his own society as a prelude to gaining a feeling of self-worth in the general community."* **Berg** and **Rentel** (1967) suggest that creative learning experiences can realize this goal. **Rogers** (1954) suggests *"psychological safety"* and *"psychological freedom,"* referring to an environment free of evaluation except for self evaluation, as conditions that foster creativity.

Lee (1960), in referring to the learning environment of a child among the Oglala Sioux, relates that *"A mother would take her baby out and attract his attention to different animals and birds long before he could talk; and only after he had learned to notice them unlabeled, did she name them for him. Later, the children were sent out to observe and then, through discussion, were helped to arrive at conclusions on the basis of their observation."* In this society, **Lee** observes, everyone has a right to his own private, *"unfiltered experience."* This *unfiltered experience"* can in many respects be related to Piaget's theory of discovery and, as well, to the relationship between language and culture in the interpretation of *"reality."*

Regan (1967) describes the program which applies psycholinguistic theory to language learning, focusing on a development of what George Miller calls the *"verbal context"* of the learner in the *"target language."* Concepts in this program are communicated in a text of illustrated frames then reinforced by a programmed television presentation which parallels the text. This is an attempt to approximate as closely as possible the process of human communication between two human beings, a process which attempts to relate language to experience. Although this program was designed for foreign language it suggests the importance of conversations, or language environment, for young children developing concepts in their native language.

In England, the *"oracy"* program is emphasized preliminary to written work in the infant schools. One teacher, in describing the effect of television has stated that *"television is here--we can beat it--and nullify some of the bad points if we join it and cash in on some of the wonderful material which is often brilliantly presented even to small children."* She refers, however, to its misuse: *"I know many so-called 'good' homes where children are placed in front of the television screen--whilst mother has a*

bit of peace in the kitchen. What is lost by doing this? All that wonderful conversation which comes from the social occasion of eating together."

In emphasizing the importance of *"speech models"* for children, **Petty** (1967) suggests that personal ties are needed between the child and his model for speech to be materially affected. He draws this conclusion from the fact that watching television does not appear to affect the structure of children's speech. **Lefevre** (1966) has explored certain aspects of language growth and development in relation to the growth and development of the whole child. He refers to language learning as no exception to the normal method of learning by experiment or by trial and error. The earliest linguistic experiment, or *"the linguistic play,"* of babies is, **Lefevre** states, our greatest single natural resource for teaching children the skills of literacy. He applies the principal of *"the freedom to make mistakes"* and to learn from one's mistakes in a natural, developmental fashion, to language learning. **Lefevre** suggests that adults who hope to influence the child's developing language skills *"intelligently, humanely, and on sound linguistic principles"* should view themselves as models rather than as policemen of language.

Bettelheim (1969) has described the language development of children living in the kibbutz in Israel. *"Language development is fostered because the child is never at a loss for someone to talk to. I have referred to the advantages of being always free to engage in a collective monologue. The children chatter to each other continuously, are silent only when a story is being read or when they are napping or asleep. The scarcity of solitude which will bother them in adolescence is no problem to children of this age who crave company and who, in their vast majority, shun solitude."*

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Language and Learning for the Disadvantaged Child

Breiter and **Engelmann** (1966) describe the disadvantaged child of preschool age as lacking the ability to use language as a device for inquiring and processing information, therefore finding language unwieldy and not very useful. If he should enjoy social speech, the authors contend, it is likely that this language is neither adequate nor useful for purposes of learning or reasoning. It is noted that with culturally deprived children, speech develops as a form of social behavior, substantially independent of motor behavior. Therefore, as the child becomes proficient in motor skills his language handicap is serious when motor acts must be coupled with judgments, as in drawing, writing, and solving problems involving manipulation of objects. The dissociation between language and action for the culturally deprived child has been likened to that observed in mentally retarded children.

Dale (1965) in describing limitations in the vocabulary of the underprivileged child because of experiential deprivation, observes that the child *"does not have a satisfactory filing system for storage or retrieval of experiences."* Vocabulary and syntax, **Dale** explains, permit new and varying patterns of new and old ideas. **Dale** suggests that we may be over-valuing the verbal, the formal, the highly symbolic language as contrasted both with formal, expressive, tangible, descriptive language, and with nonverbal language.

The reasons for differentiating instructions for disadvantaged students have been related to the relevant social class differences in child rearing values. Since it has been found that working-class parents value conformity to external proscriptions and middle-class parents value self direction, the disadvantaged child is not trained to work in a self-disciplined style and is inexperienced in planning activities as well as being unprepared

for situations in which he is asked for preferences. Regularity and pattern in classroom activities in which there is close teacher direction and structured learning activities appear to be more successful with disadvantaged youngsters (Levine 1966).

Hunt (1964) with reference to Piaget's observations suggests that for the culturally deprived child varied experiences would foster the development of representative imagery which could then be the referents for spoken words and later for written language. In keeping with this view of the importance of nonverbal education of culturally deprived children, Montessori methods of nonverbal type of sensory and manipulative experience are recommended. Limitations in the experience of disadvantaged children cause the deficiencies in language which make them unable to make a transition from the object, to recognition of a picture of the object, to recall of the absent object, to recognition of a symbol which stands for the object: a word oral or written, or code of any kind (Mackintosh 1965).

Luria (1961) has observed that the ability to control one's own behavior through language does not come about automatically as one learns to say and do various things. The integration of the two becomes a learned ability.

In describing *"the disadvantaged child and the learning process"* **Deutsch** (1963) indicates that it was found that the lower-class child has more expressive language ability than is generally recognized, or than emerges in the classroom. With the main differences between social classes in the level of syntactical organization, **Deutsch** also reported that data indicated that class differences in perceptual abilities and in general environmental orientation decrease with chronological age, whereas language differences tend to increase. He suggests that perceptual development may occur first, and that language growth and its importance in problem solving develops later. If this

interpretation is supported, then the implication would be that the lower-class child comes to school with major deficits in the perceptual, rather than the language area. With such a maturational lag, the language deficit would increase in the school situation and would remain as the perceptual deficit is overcome. **Deutsch** suggests that the remedy for such a situation would be emphasis on perceptual training for these children in preschool years combined with a gradual introduction of language training. **Deutsch** and **Baynaham** (1963) both placed emphasis on perceptual experiences of culturally deprived children.

Frazier (1964) speaks of *"language under-development"* and has studied *"unconceptualized experience and under-developed language"* in a program specifically designed to deal with the problem. **Frazier** indicates that although a child may be able to make highly differentiated verbal responses to some aspects of his experience that are highly valued by his family, he may lack the framework for thinking and the words to use in dealing with more remote or *"less important"* matters and he may have less language to think with in approaching school-sponsored experiences.

The child's ability, or inability, to use an *"if-then"* rule is said to determine his control of verbal behavior through an *"internal dialogue"* by means of which he may solve a problem, working a step at a time (Vygotsky 1962).

The effect of environment on child development in general, and language development in particular, has been examined from the viewpoint of test performance. It has been hypothesized that in contrast to the middle-class child, the lower-class child will tend to be less verbal, less motivated toward scholastic and academic achievement, less exposed to intellectually stimulating materials in the home, and less knowledgeable about the world outside his immediate neighborhood (Fishman 1964). **Reissman** (1962)

characterized cultural deprivation as *"those aspects of middle-class culture such as education, books, formal language, from which these groups have not benefitted."* With respect to cultural deprivation, **Reissman** had estimated that by 1970, 50 percent of public school pupils in large cities would be culturally deprived. **Deutsch** (1964) has reported that 65 percent of the Negro children in a large Eastern city had never been more than 25 blocks from home; 50 percent had no pen or pencil at home; and the majority of homes had no books. **Deutsch** also noted that since the children had been exposed primarily to terse commands at home they could not follow simple oral directions in school.

Bereiter (1967) describes the language handicap of the disadvantaged in terms of language rules about how language operates and about what can be done with it: *"Even if the language he learns is fundamentally the same as the language of those who will teach him he has likely not learned the language rules that are necessary for defining concepts, for drawing inferences, for asking questions, and for giving explanations. Moreover, by his inability to make full use of language as a tool in learning and thinking he is prevented from taking full advantage of the opportunities for education and advancement that are at last being made available to him."* This would support new developments in curriculum content, related to overcoming experiential and cognitive deficits through emphasis on language activities and verbal behavior, as well as concept formation and organization (Frazier 1968).

Cazden (1969) refers to children's learning of their native language before entering school as being fairly certain, if not complete; less certain, however, are the implications for ways of helping children continue their learning in school. The most obvious implication, **Cazden** suggests, is that teachers should act the way parents have acted:

"talk with children about topics of mutual interest in the context of the child's ongoing work and play." The effectiveness of the preschool programs that focus on language development based on the above implication, has not been demonstrated. **Cazden** suggests two different explanations: first, children who need help with language may need very specific kinds of help which we have failed to recognize in diagnosis of their communication problems; second, the children may need help in very general, cognitive areas as focusing attention in school and on tests. **Cazden** warns that test results in the more structured program should be examined carefully to determine whether the child has supplied answers without the responses being *"assimilated into his total linguistic and cognitive system."*

In *Guidelines for Testing Minority Group Children* (Fishman 1964), the factor of language ability is emphasized. It is suggested that the decline in academic aptitude and achievement test scores of disadvantaged children (Masland, Sarason and Gladwin 1958) leads to the assumption that the decline represents the cumulative effects of diminished opportunities and decreasing motivation for acquiring academic knowledge and skills. It is also suggested that consideration be given to the form of a question since a child might be able to recognize an object but not be able to name it; or he might be able to identify a geometric figure but not be able to reproduce it. *"Failure-inducing barriers"* for the minority-group child in a testing situation would include, for example, testing a child from a disadvantaged social group who shows a considerable degree of verbal facility in oral communication with his peers, on test items that stress academic vocabulary.

Implications of the "Hidden Curriculum"

Wolfe (1968) uses the term *"culturally different"* rather than culturally deprived in describing disadvantaged children. She contends that children from impoverished families are not culturally deprived in the sense that they are culture-less, but rather that their cultures and heritage differ from those cultivated by the middle-class schools they attend. She suggests that cultural differences in a classroom be utilized in meeting educational needs.

Olsen (1965) claims that the culturally different children have a great deal of untapped verbal ability of a highly imaginative nature and this ability remains latent because *"our schools militate against direct and meaningful discussion."* He contends that if we say that poor children are not verbal children then the burden of change is with the child. If, however, we attribute the verbal unresponsiveness to the curriculum, the audience, the teaching strategy, and the formality of the learning situation, the burden of change is upon the school. **Olsen** states that activities which are inappropriate to these children will make a child appear *"wordlocked"* when he is really *"concept-locked."* Language development, he adds, results when we think things through out loud--not necessarily from giving right answers. From this viewpoint, classroom practice based upon the questions and answers, with a reward for correct answers, deserves serious reevaluation, especially for those children who are in need of extensive opportunities for language development.

Frazier (1964) has pointed out that the great mass of children we consider poorly languaged actually have quite a lot of language. The lack comes in what they know how to talk about. **Frazier** stresses a program structured for thinking processes and language activities. The thinking processes which form a framework for language

development are relating, generalizing, classifying, and modifying. In linking language development with environmental situations, **Frazier** quotes *"a pioneer": "A man is effective linguistically in those situations, and those only, in which he has often been placed, and in reaction upon which he has been constantly urged, by force of circumstances, to express himself readily and to the point"* (O'Shea 1907).

Cazden (1965) investigated the ways the uses of language differ in various sub-cultural groups and to what extent the language of any group may be considered deficient by some criteria. His comprehensive review of the work of linguists, developmental, psychologists, anthropologists and sociologists, and experimental psychologists led the author to conclude that most is known about language development, little is know about dialect differences, and little is known about differences in language function. **Cazden** suggests that developmental scales of language development do not distort an assessment of children who speak a nonstandard dialect, and that studies of language function do not simply reflect the predilection of the investigators. It is implied that a child's language development be evaluated for progress toward norms of his particular speech community.

Miller (1964) states that differences in the linguistic code cannot be correlated with differences in the sociocultural system. He claims that the linguistic features the child must learn present a similar learning problem for all children. **Miller** recognizes differences in learning the uses and functions of the language that correspond with sociocultural differences. He contends that before the child can learn to utilize his language he must learn the formal linguistic features of the sound system and of the grammar, constituting the linguistic code, and this code varies from group to group, in both language and dialect.

Deutsch (1965) has spoken of the *"hidden curriculum"* of middle-class homes that does an effective job of preparing the children to enter school. **Powledge** (1967) in supporting curriculum changes or adjustments describes the American public schools as *"designed with only the middle-class child in mind and, therefore, by definition, they are institutions that to the child who is not equipped to cope with middle-class methods and concepts, who comes into the classroom with no previous knowledge of what middle-class America seeks, demands, or even is, are strange and foreign places."* **Powledge** adds that school is a continuation of the atmosphere that has prevailed all along in the middle-class home. The disadvantaged child, on the other hand, brings a background almost totally different that only hinders him as he attempts to cope with the new environment. *"He brings a whole series of qualities which can only be referred to by the majority society as deficiencies."* The purpose of building on the strength of the disadvantaged child, according to **Reissman** (1968) is not to have him *"become a poor edition of the middle-class youngster, a very faded carbon copy"* but to have him contribute to the mainstream of American life, *"his style, his pep, his demand that school not be dull and boring, his rich feeling for metaphor and colorful language."*

The **Deutsch** reference to a *"hidden curriculum"* is implied in the following: In describing the importance of language development for the preschool age child, a headmistress of a London nursery school (Haemmerle 1966) acknowledges the needs of children of *"working-class families"* but adds that the middle-class child too, has much to gain from a good nursery school program. *"The middle-class child comes from a home where talk and books are considered normal--his mother probably tries to arrange playmates and he may well be swamped with "educational" toys; the*

working-class child is more likely to be dumped in a pushchair and trundled around like a bundle of laundry--when he tries to talk he is handed a bun or a bar of chocolate or a television set to keep him quiet--and he is just as much deprived as the half-starved child of one hundred years ago."

Instructional Programs

It was an awareness of the great difference in learning between slum children and those reared in more affluent circumstances that led to the founding of project Head Start in 1965 (Senn 1969). **Senn** attributes early limited success of the Head Start program to the inexperience of teachers and administrators who did not know the characteristics of children of particular racial or socioeconomic background, nor how to fashion appropriate learning opportunities for these children. In addition, he suggests, the teachers lacked objectivity in their approach.

Biber (1967) describes project Head Start as an effort to compensate for the deprivation many children have suffered because of the circumstance of life into which they were born. In discussing the educational needs of young, deprived children she states that *"while they need special understanding and adjustment to their particular needs and characteristics, they are like all other children. Fundamentally, they have the same potentialities, the same curiosity, the same basic human problems to face in life--except that life has given them some extra ones no children should really have."* Among the different methods used in the Head Start program is the **Engelmann** and **Bereiter** (1966) program which concentrates on teaching children certain special items which they believe every child must know when he enters first grade. The program had three distinctive characteristics: (1) a high ratio of teachers to students, (2) reliance on

drill, and (3) learning by rote. The emphasis in learning is on work, not play, and on making everything count as if time needed to be conserved.

Bromwich (1969) in discussing two concepts of early education with respect to language, distinguishes between the methodical and experiential approaches. With the methodical she refers to the formal instructional program of **Bereiter** and **Engelmann** (1966). On the other hand, the *"natural manner"* or experiential approach, occurs in an atmosphere in which verbal expression is used for interacting with others and as an effective way of mediating between action and thought. **Bromwich** questions whether the methodical, choral repetition of the **Bereiter** program can be considered language as it is used in communication. **Bromwich** (1969) describes three types of programs used, particularly with disadvantaged children: (1) the prescriptive-instructional approach which is highly structured, (2) the developmental approach which places the child in an unstructured but rich, experiential environment and (3) the modified developmental approach which emphasizes the importance of helping the disadvantaged child develop expressive or spoken language *"in communication with others and in relation to his experiences throughout the day."* Bromwich supports the modified developmental approach which she claims, synthesizes the advantages of the two extremes.

Three approaches to the teaching of language have been described by the British linguists, **Halliday**, **McIntosh**, and **Strevens** (1965) as (1) prescriptive, (2) descriptive, and (3) productive. **Emig** (1967) applies their distinctions to recent findings and classroom practice. She states that prescriptive teaching focuses on the minuscule failures in a student's mastery of language since it is concerned with standards. Descriptive and productive teaching, on the other hand, focus on his actual and potential attainment. **Emig** suggests that the major emphasis in productive teaching

should be the extension of students registers both in oral and written language use. The British term of *"register"* refers to specific realms of language usage within a given purpose or function.

In a guide to the education of disadvantaged children during the primary years it is noted that the focus *"for several years" is on developing a language through broadening the experiential background and opportunities for oral communication"* (Mackintosh 1965).

Wood (1964) describes the influence of nonverbal behavior on language development. Language-related behavior factors including tonal patterns, gestures, and facial expressions are considered as possible influences on the development of language. **Hall** (1959) refers to nonverbal communication factors in his description of *"silent language."*

The Head Start and preschool programs evidence the wide interpretation of the four essentials for the ideal nursery school proposed by **Margaret MacMillan** over 60 years ago: (1) nearness to the mother, (2) a garden, (3) a mother's club, and (4) adaptation to the needs of the neighborhood (Johns 1966).

The Teacher's Role

Crosby (1965) notes that not one major project in the education of the disadvantaged child has failed to identify language development as the key to educational success of the child in school. She observes that children are being helped to recognize that everyone needs more than one dialect and that most grown-ups usually use at least two: the family dialect in family situations and informal standard English in other situations. This permits the disadvantaged child to use the language he knows in his own dialect while maintaining an interest in language and language

instruction. **Crosby** concludes *"human values must not be sacrificed to attain language power."*

Loban (1968) in suggestions for teaching children who speak "social class dialects" stresses the importance of oral language development until the child is using the full range of his mental, emotional, and linguistic potential. **Loban** warns, *"if we do not first encourage the child to use his own indigenous language in its full range, we will diminish his desire to use language in school."* The child's oral language has been termed the most important resource available to the school for educating the child and teachers should, therefore, place emphasis upon the child's using whatever language he already has as the means of thinking, exploring, imagining, and expressing.

Goodman (1965) terms the child who speaks a dialect different from that which the school, text, or teacher defines as standard, *"the divergent speaker."* **Goodman** refers to the several kinds of language the divergent speaker finds in his environment: the ideolects within dialects of individual classmates, the language of the teacher in informal and standard speech, the literary form in books, and the artificial language of the basal reader. Citing his conviction that children must be helped to develop a pride in their language and confidence in their ability to use their language to communicate their ideas and express themselves, **Goodman** contends that the teacher and the school should accept the language which the learner brings to school.

Pederson (1965) reviews three aspects of the overall problem of language learning of culturally disadvantaged children and youth: (1) language underdevelopment; (2) social dialectology; and (3) problems of investigation. **Pederson** suggests that in determining criteria for evaluation close attention must be given to those standards of correctness observed by the teacher and the observer. He also suggests that the

attitudes of the observers be compared with those of the teachers and their students in the classroom, and poses the question, *"What is to be done about the compulsive middle-class reactions of many Caucasian teachers or the hyper-corrective tendencies of the upward mobile Negro?":*

Marchwardt (1965), in an address relating to teaching English as a second language, stated, *"The acquisition of a second language is more than merely the ability to manipulate a complex of linguistic patterns, since the very organization of the patterns and the nature of the lexicon reveal and, to a degree, control the culture of the people who employ them."* This statement, in a context of adult education is virtually identical in concept to the description of the situation of the disadvantaged child.

Cohn (1959) regards the language of the lower class as a separate dialect related to but distinct from standard English. By giving it a respect due a dialect he seeks to list the uses of lower-class English in communication. He cites the use of lower-class speech at times by the higher classes for a variety of purposes and notes that according to **Bernstein's** (1962) description, the difference between the speech of higher and lower-class youngsters does not lie in an absolute language distinction, but in the acquisition by the higher classes of standard English in addition to the common lower-class forms. Further, members of the higher classes often borrow from lower-class vocabulary; some writers use lower-class language forms to reproduce common speech realistically; while others seem to choose lower-class language for its emotive quality. **Cohn** contends that class antagonism on the part of the middle-class teacher toward lower-class children is one of the most important contributing factors in the alienation of the lower classes from our public schools. He proposes that *"the teacher who has a rational approach to the*

differences between the two languages, the teacher who is unhampered by moralistic and snobbish attitudes, can help children with their ambivalence towards language expression."

Daley (1968) has cited the need for a specialized approach to the teaching of English in the schools that serve disadvantaged children. She refers to the findings of linguistic research in considering special methods for developing the language skills of those children who grow up in a subculture in which a nonstandard form of English is consistently spoken. **Daley** provides an interesting example: word pairs such as mine, and mind; find, find; pull, pulled; have merged to become homophones in the dialect and suggest modification in the methods of teaching spelling. *"The over-pronunciation that many teachers indulge in in order to get the children to spell a word correctly is a fictitious prop which vanishes immediately after the spelling lesson, because neither child nor teacher articulates the words and questions with any such precision in their daily speech."* **Daley** supports the logic and effectiveness of programs for written language, built directly around *"the systematic differences in the dialect as it is spoken."*

Ammons (1969) recommends that within the language arts program, children should have opportunities to engage in *"verbal-cognitive behavior"* that would be in relation to a type of communication rather than in relation to mastery of an area of study and she suggests that the child be allowed to become increasingly proficient in the types of communication with which he is already familiar, *"assuming that more attention can be paid to the quality of his communication and his ability to interpret his world than if we force upon him a type of communication with which he has to struggle."*

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Davis (1965) designates the *"first-learned culture"* of the Negro, disadvantaged child as the chief obstacle to school achievement, although this represents the language and way of life which he already has learned in his family. **Davis** suggests that the first step in helping students improve their attitudes toward themselves and towards the schoolwork is *"to change our attitudes toward them."* In addition, **Davis** states without a learning environment in which there is mutual respect, the child who may be expected to change the behavior which his own father, mother, and peer group have taught him, may, as has been pointed out, find that *"his best defense is to be silent"* (Goodman 1965). This supports the earlier view of **McQuown** (1954) who, in describing the child with *"unacceptable speech"* stated that since the child's speech constitutes a precious link with those closest to him, any criticism of his ways of talking will be damaging to his self-esteem.

To eliminate the discrepancy between the school's symbols and the realities of these youngsters, the teacher must ask *"what is the relationship between these words and the child's reality? Do these words I am using have the same meaning for the pupils as they have for me?"* (Fantini, Weinstein 1966).

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